

Email notice sent to hospital data reporting contacts on January 7, 2009

Due to the difficulty of 2008-01 data collection, the state was unable to begin preparations for 2008-02 until the fourth week of December. It was therefore impossible for the state to process test files during December. However, all test files that were received by the state in December will be processed as soon as possible during January and the results provided to the hospitals as usual.

The Arizona Hospital Discharge Data Reporting Specifications Manual, supporting documentation and forms have been updated for 2008-02, and are available on our website at: <http://www.azdhs.gov/plan/crr/ddr/hospa1/index.htm>. The changes for 2008-02 are listed in the Manual Change History located in the front of the manual, and indicated with red text throughout the Manual as "Transmittal 003."

We are aware that the late release of these changes may render it difficult, or in some cases impossible, for the changes to be made in time for the February 15, 2009 reporting deadline. Please be advised that our expectation is that hospitals and their vendors will simply do the best they can, and communicate with this office any areas of anticipated non-compliance. We will work with you.

One change of significance is related to the reporting of Patient Reason for Visit. As most of you are aware, there were significant problems with this data element during 2008-01 reporting, particularly on the inpatient side. All of the information on this issue collected from hospitals during 2008-01 has been reviewed. We have seen that in many cases the hospital HIMS do not support collection of this data element. For the few hospitals that did report this data element in their inpatient file, in many cases the data provided was not the true "patient's stated reason for seeking care" but instead was simply a replication of either the Admitting or Principal Diagnosis fields, which provides no additional value.

Based on our review, the inpatient reporting requirements for this data element are being revised. Commencing with 2008-02 discharge records, this data element is no longer reportable on inpatient records.

Please note that on Emergency Department records the specifications have NOT changed; reporting of this data element is still required.

For those hospitals that submitted test files during December, your files will be audited and you will receive your test results by the end of January. Thank you for your patience.